

Home & Garden



Published by:





Dear Neighbours,

On behalf of Council and staff of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, it is my pleasure to bring greetings by way of this information filled Garden Magazine.

Although we have experienced a lengthy winter season, we are grateful for the hint of warm weather and I am thrilled to say that spring has officially arrived. No doubt most of you join me in eagerly anticipating sunny skies and the opportunity to spend quality time in our gardens and backyards with family and friends. This year you will once again see colourful hanging baskets and barrel planters along with various municipal and facility gardens throughout our community. Maintenance of our town parks and municipal gardens for your enjoyment is a priority for our Leisure Services staff. The mill wheel on Holland Street and the heron

fountain on Barrie Street will again be adorned with a vibrant, colourful display of summer flowers.

To enjoy the beautiful outdoors we have a number of key events planned. The Town continues to participate in Community Clean Up Day, the Marsh Mash, the Mayor's Hike for Health, Canada Day and Carrafest. The Town enthusiastically supports the Adopt a Park, Place, or Path program; a clean, green, litter free community initiative fostered by local families.

I wish all of our residents a wonderful spring and summer season and all the best in your gardening efforts around your own homes and workplaces.

Warmest regards,

Doug White

Mayor

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74 John St. West.
P.O. Box 1570
Bradford, ON L3Z 2B8
905-775-4471

ADVERTISING
Gary Assis Ext. 222
Luisa Perdiz Ext. 231

EDITOR
Miriam King Ext. 223

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Megan Sampson

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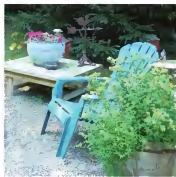
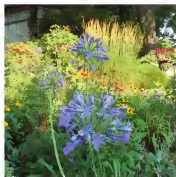
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How to create a paver walkway or patio

Creating a walkway or patio out of paving stones can add aesthetic appeal to a property. Pavers are less permanent than concrete and decking. As a result, it is easier to change the design later on if you want to give the space a new look.

Homeowners who install their own pavers can save a considerable amount of money. Because installing paving stones can be labor-intensive, landscape contractors may charge a premium for installation. However, this is a project that can be tackled by the do-it-yourselfer.

1. Measure and plot out the area that will become the path or patio. The area of the space can be figured out by multiplying length times width. This will help you determine just how much material you will need.
2. Visit the home improvement store or a supplier of stone and other masonry supplies to determine the style and color of the paving stones you will use in the project. Some homeowners prefer to have the materials delivered to their home to save the hassle of extra heavy lifting and moving.
3. Using a shovel or a tiller, dig down and remove the grass to a depth of four to six inches from the area that will become the path or patio.
4. Fill in the area you dug out with a paver base material, using a tamper (either manual or power-driven) to tamp down the paver base until it is level and smooth.
5. Apply about one inch of paving sand to further level out the path or patio. This will be the material on which the paving stones are laid.
6. Begin laying the paving stones. Leave the appropriate distance between stones desired by your pattern. If the paving stones will not have any gap and serve as a continuous patio, leave only the smallest gap between them.

7. Spread more paving sand on top of the paving stones and, using a broom, sweep it over the stones and into the crevices between them to set the stones.

8. Create the rest of the garden design around the patio or pathway using gravel, plants and even edging material to finish the look. Over time you may need to sweep more paving sand over the stones to keep them secure.



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Your outdoor living room gives you room to live

Tacky, flimsy plastic garden chairs have no place in the Outdoor Living Rooms that more and more homeowners are embracing.

Instead, patios and decks are becoming extensions of the interior - a space for relaxation and entertaining, like the living room, but with the added benefit of pool, water-garden, and BBQ.

Outdoor furnishings offer style - and comfort. Lightweight and durable aluminum frames, sturdy plastics that capture the look of rattan, and comfortable pillows that are waterproof and washable all create a welcoming space that encourages relaxation. Muskoka chairs have a long tradition - but face it, they're not terribly comfortable, and they always look better at the end of a dock on a northern Ontario lake.

Colour is the key. You can choose bright colours and patterns for your outdoor furnishings and patio umbrellas - or keep the colours classic and neutral, and spice it up with whimsical pillows, garden art, dishes and glassware. Entertaining in your outdoor living room is so much more than "drinks on the deck," these days. Garden parties and fine dining call for a range of colorful accessories.

Enhance your outdoor living room. Add lighting, features that provide privacy, that simplify entertaining, that provide a sound system that can be enjoyed outdoors.

Create a transition. At one end, is your house and interior space - at the other, your garden and flowerbeds. Use your outdoor living room to transition from one to the other, by including natural materials, climbing plants on pergolas and trellises, and adding container gardens and "potsapes" of favourite flowers and herbs. The containers have an added benefit of providing a source of fresh herbs for the BBQ and the kitchen - but make sure that they don't block doors or stairways, or pose a tripping hazard.



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Go green in your garden

Gardening can be a rewarding and relaxing hobby, one that allows gardeners to escape from the daily grind and soak up some sun. As rewarding as gardening can be, it's even more so when gardeners ply their trade in an eco-friendly way.

Gardening with the environment in mind is something many gardeners might do already without even knowing it. The following are a few ways to garden in a way that's mutually beneficial to gardeners and the environment.

- Use mulch to conserve resources and reduce reliance on fertilizers. Conserving resources is one of the best ways to help the environment, and applying mulch is a great way to conserve water. Mulch helps the soil retain water, keeping the water from evaporating into the air, which means less watering for gardeners who want to keep their gardens looking lush and healthy.

In addition to helping conserve water, mulch can also help reduce reliance on fertilizers. That's because mulch provides nutrients to the soil as it breaks down, providing an eco-friendly alternative for gardeners who don't want to rely on fertilizers to deliver nutrients to their soil.

- **Plant more flowers.** Planting flowers is another eco-friendly way to garden. Native flowers, in particular, can help maintain an area's natural ecosystem, providing food and shelter for insects and other wildlife.

More flowers and plants around the property also means there will be significantly less grass to mow, which reduces the amount of gas necessary to mow that grass in the warmer weather and the amount of greenhouse gases the lawn mower produces. In addition, less grass means less need for fertilizers and pesticides to maintain that grass.

- Choose gardening tools and products with the environment in mind. Veteran gardeners have a host of tools that help tackle every problem imaginable. But many older tools or gardening products might not be made of recycled materials. When shopping for gardening tools, whether you're a beginner who needs everything or a veteran gardener whose tools have seen better days, choose products made

from recycled materials. For example, many gardeners use mats to help reduce stress on their knees when kneeling down to garden. When buying a new mat, choose one made from recycled tires.

But emphasizing recycled products shouldn't stop at the tool shed. Mulch, for instance, can be made from recycled rubber and won't impact the environment in a negative way. Just be sure to purchase recycled mulch that is nontoxic and does not consume natural resources.

- Live and let live: insects might be a nuisance, but they can also be a gardener's best friend. Spraying insecticide simply because insects can be pesky is shortsighted and impractical. Certain spiders prey on other insects that can be harmful to a garden, while butterflies and bees help pollenate flowers. Earthworms are also very beneficial to a garden, helping to aerate and fertilize the soil and enabling plants to grow by removing harmful matter from the soil.

Gardening is a rewarding hobby, one that is even more so when gardeners institute eco-friendly practices.



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Preventing weed growth a priority for homeowners

Weeds in a lawn or garden can be an unsightly and potentially unhealthy nuisance. No gardener enjoys seeing weeds spring up throughout his or her carefully planted garden, as such unwanted guests rob a well-tended garden of its aesthetic appeal. In addition, weeds can steal valuable water and nutrients from plants, prohibiting their growth as a result.

Homeowners who understand how harmful weeds can be can prevent them in a variety of ways. Where weed growth is insignificant, it might be possible to simply pull them out of the ground before they can do any substantial damage. In areas of heavy weed growth, however, a more concentrated effort must be made to prevent further weed growth once the weeds have been removed. The following are a few ways homeowners can prevent weeds from growing throughout their lawns.

- Be proactive. Preventing weed growth is a proactive job, so homeowners want to be proactive to keep weeds from infesting their property. Proper and routine lawn maintenance might be all it takes. Add quality topsoil to your lawn or garden to produce a healthier



surface that makes it more difficult for weeds to grow. As the season progresses, continue to maintain your lawn by mowing and watering.

- Aerate the soil at the onset of the season. Aerating your lawn at the dawn of the mowing season helps break up soil that grew compacted over the winter. Once aerated, the soil can disperse nutrients, oxygen and water more effectively, allowing healthier roots to grow and reducing the risk of weed growth as a result.

- Fertilize the lawn. Fertilizer helps grass grow in thick and dense, which leaves little to no room for the growth of weeds. While fertilizer does not necessarily guarantee that weeds won't grow, it does go a long way toward helping a lawn grow in healthy, and a healthy lawn is often a weed's worst enemy. Some fertilizers on the market are a combination of fertilizer and weed preventer, and such products might be ideal for homeowners who are especially concerned about weed growth. The lifespan of weed preventers varies, so keep in mind that you might need to reapply a weed preventer in a few months to keep getting the same results. Fertilizing is typically done twice a year, once in the spring and again in the fall.

- Lay down landscape fabric. Landscape fabric is another weed prevention alternative that can prevent weed growth for several years. Before laying down landscape fabric, which is perhaps most commonly used in flower beds, remove all weeds and other vegetation you do not wish to grow. You will likely need to cut the fabric to the area you want it to cover and cut an opening for plants and flowers. The fabric is then typically covered with mulch, which keeps the fabric in place.

Landscape fabric is effective because it blocks the sun from reaching any area that it's covering while still allowing air, water and nutrients to penetrate and reach the soil. Weeds need sun to grow, so landscape fabric can be highly effective at preventing weed growth.

Weeds are an unsightly nuisance that homeowners would prefer to do without. Preventing weed growth is relatively easy, and, in many cases, your efforts can bear fruit through the entire season.

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Eco fees, not tire tax

By: Michael Scott, CEO of Waste Diversion Ontario

Many people have already heard that the cost to recycle some larger, heavier tires used in farming and other industries has gone up, effective April 1.

There is another, more positive side to the story.

First, the "eco fee" is not a tax. Not one penny goes to the government. Instead, it is a cost that tire manufacturers charge consumers at the retail level, to help cover the cost of recycling the tire. Although consumers are sometimes told by sales clerks that the cost, included in the sticker price, "is a government tax and they're making us do it" - it's just not true.

It is the real cost of responsibly managing scrap tires by keeping them out of landfill, out of ditches, and out of incinerators.

And while the fee for heavy tires went up on April 1, the tire recycling cost for passenger and light truck tires actually dropped slightly, from \$5.84 per tire, to \$5.69. Over 90% of all tires recycled to date come from the Passenger and Light Truck group, which includes trucks less than 10,000 lbs. in gross weight, motorcycles and sidecars, golf carts and SUVs.

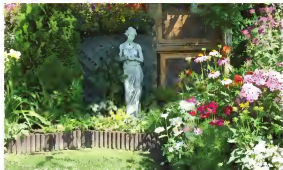
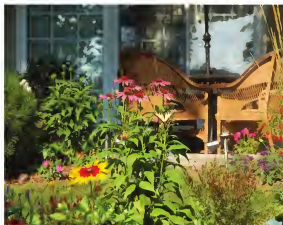
The recycling fee for medium truck tires, such as commercial trucks and buses, remains unchanged, at \$14.65 per tire.

Another good news story: The Used Tires Program has been a great success since it began in 2009, diverting almost 52 million tires from landfills. Ontarians can now drop off up to 4 old tires for free, even without buying new ones, at more than 6,900 collection locations across the province.

When you buy new tires in Ontario, you will see the eco fee stated as a line item on your invoice. If you think the recycling cost being charged is incorrect, and you can't resolve the issue at the retailer, staff at the Ministry of Consumer Services can help; call the hot-line at 1-800-889-9768 toll free.

Ontario is the only province that has taken on recycling of the heavier and larger "Off-the-road" tires - and its Ontario Used Tire Program has focused on the development of green manufacturing and jobs, promoting the highest-value recycling of used tires.

Wheels move the world. From the small tires on your car, to the large tires on a transport truck, tires connect people to people, and people to products. That's why tires are important - and why recycling them makes so much sense.



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Steps to a healthy lawn

A beautiful, healthy lawn is like a beautiful smile - welcoming, attractive, and key to a positive image.

To ensure a healthy lawn, try the following tips:

- **Watering.** Your lawn will require 1" to 2" of water per week - with deeper watering needed during hot dry periods. Deep watering once a week is preferable to shorter, more frequent waterings. Frequent, short watering results in a shallow root system - more susceptible to drought, insects and disease. A properly watered lawn also makes it tougher for weeds to grow. Just be sure you understand the municipal watering restrictions, if any, and follow the rules.

- **Mowing.** Shorter is not better. As a rule, never cut more than one-third of the blade of grass at any one time. Make sure the mower blades are sharp, to prevent tearing, which can increase risk of disease. The lawn should be cut to a height of 2" to 3".

- **Aeration.** Compacted soil is the enemy of root growth. Aeration - the removal of small plugs of soil and thatch from the lawn - will allow air, water and nutrients to pass freely into the root zone. Most lawns need aeration once a year. Removal of thatch is also important. Thatch is the layer of grass stems, dead roots and debris that can build up between the growing grass and the soil - and can block air, water and fertilizer from penetrating to the roots, if it becomes too thick.

- **Fertilizer.** Feed your lawn a balanced diet, based on the time of year, and the soil's pH. PH is one of the basics of soil chemistry - a measure of the acidity or alkalinity of the soil. PH influences nutrient availability. Knowing your soil's pH level will help determine which nutrients might be missing in the soil, and which fertilizers will be best. Bottom line, healthy lawns begin with healthy soil!

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Your local vegetable patch

There's an increasing trend towards "buying local", when it comes to fresh vegetables - and what could be more local than veggies you grow yourself?

Rob Radcliffe, representing the 2nd generation at the family-run Lakeview Gardens Garden Centre in Lefroy, has some tips for would-be vegetable gardeners.

Choose your garden site carefully. "Look at the light level of the area. Most veggies need at least 5-6 hours of sunlight." Planting in a shady corner will handicap your garden before it even sends up a shoot.

Start small. "A 4' by 10' raised bed can produce quite a lot," Radcliffe says. One of the biggest mistakes of novice gardeners is to over-plant - either cramming too many plants into the space, or simply planting too many of one variety. Most families can't keep up with the crop from 2 cherry tomato plants - let alone a whole row.

Preparation is #1. "You can never dig deep enough," when preparing the soil for your garden. "Dig deep, and then dig a little deeper." Working the soil to a greater depth will encourage root growth. "The bigger the root system, the bigger the top - the bigger the top, the more it can produce." Deep roots also increase the drought-resistance of the plant.

Don't "tease" water. When you water the garden, water it well - at least 1" of water at a time. Then let the soil dry out between waterings.

Don't rush the season. There's a reason that May 24 is the traditional date for planting gardens in Ontario, and that reason is frost. While some cold-tolerant vegetables - like radishes, and some varieties of lettuce - can be planted early, for most other veggies, it's way too early to plant. Be especially careful of putting peppers and tomatoes in the ground too soon. "You have to realize the ground temperature has to be high enough for the tomatoes and peppers, because they are heat-loving plants."

Some plants should be seeded directly in the ground - like cabbages, lettuce, dill and fennel - but other plants benefit from being started in flats or pots, indoors. It gives them a head-start on the season, and they can be transplanted to the garden as soon as conditions are right.

Planting in a container? Make sure the container is "size-appropriate. When the plant grows 7-8' high, a 2 gallon pot is not big enough." And remember to water, whenever the soil seems dry, and light.

Rotate the location of your garden, and your plants. If you plant carrots or cabbages in the same place, year after year, you can expect to see an increase in pests and diseases. "The problems are left in the soil."

Radcliffe doesn't practice "Companion Planting," although he acknowledges that some people have great success with it - but he does recommend planting marigolds among the vegetables to deter insect pests. It has to be the right kind of marigold - Lemon Gem and Tangerine Gem Tagetes marigolds, with fern-like foliage, are high in alpha-terthienyl to drive away bugs. An added plus: "The flowers are edible, and go in your salad, along with the pansies and the nasturtiums."

Radcliffe has two other pieces of valuable advice, for any gardener. The first is, "Make sure your kids are involved in growing. Give them a little section, and give them something easy to grow."

The final word? "Don't be afraid to make mistakes - because you're going to make mistakes. You learn by trial and error. And there's lot's of advice, online as well as at the garden centre."

Article Courtesy of Lakeview Gardens garden centre, 1712 Killarney Beach Road in Lefroy, Innisfil; www.lakeviewgardencentre.com

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Road Trip... Go over the pre-trip checklist

Warm weather is finally here, and the days are getting longer. A perfect time to hit the road, and take a trip across this great province and country.

Before heading out on a road trip, in search of sun and fun, a few quick precautions can help ensure that your vacation doesn't include unscheduled pit stops.

ACDelco offers the following "Pre-Trip Checklist", that can help you get ready for the road.

- Check all major fluids, including engine oil, power-steering fluid, brake fluid, and transmission fluid - and don't forget the antifreeze/coolant.
- Make Sure the windshield washer solvent container is topped off. If you are heading out on the open road, carry an extra container.
- Check the engine belts and hoses, which can become cracked, brittle, frayed, loose or show signs of excessive wear, especially if you didn't check under the hood during the cold winter months. The belts

and hoses are critical to the proper functioning of the engine, but also the electrical system, air conditioning, power steering and cooling systems.

- Check your tire air pressure and tread condition. Proper air pressure helps optimize fuel economy and reduce tire wear, while poor tread condition and other problems, such as bald spots or uneven wear, can potentially cause tire problems on a long trip.
- Replace windshield wiper blades if they've been "chattering", smearing or streaking.
- Check all of your exterior lights - including headlamps, turn signals, tail lamps and brake lamps. Recruit someone to stand near the front and rear of the vehicle as you activate all of the various lights.

You can go through the checklist yourself, or bring the vehicle in to your service centre, to inspect all items, and quickly replace or repair anything in need of attention.

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Gardening tips for beginners

Gardening is a rewarding hobby that many enthusiasts credit with helping them to peacefully escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Though gardening can be both relaxing and rewarding, it's not as easy as it may seem, and the more time and effort a person devotes to his or her garden the more likely it is to be successful.

Gardening can be a little daunting for beginners who have little or no experience planting flowers or vegetables. But gardening need not be so intimidating, especially for those beginners who adhere to the following tips aimed at helping novice gardeners start their gardens off on the right foot.

- Determine what you should plant. Where you live will go a long way toward determining what you should plant. While you can plant anything you can get your hands on, the United States Department of Agriculture as well as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada have determined specific plant hardiness zones that indicate which plants are most likely to thrive in given locations. Maps of these zones can be found at www.usda.gov and www.agr.gc.ca. By adhering to the maps, gardeners can significantly increase their chances of growing successful gardens. When in doubt about what to plant, consult a local gardening center or seek advice from a professional landscaper.

- Think location when beginning your garden. Beginners with large yards have the luxury of choosing the right location on their properties to start planting. When choosing a spot, consider how much sunlight a location gets on a daily basis and the spot's proximity to a water supply. If planting flowers, try to avoid planting in areas with heavy foot traffic so the flowers are less likely to be stomped. If you're planting flowers to accent walkways, then consider erecting a barrier around the flower bed to safeguard the flowers from foot traffic.

- Get started before you plant. Preparing the soil a few weeks before you start planting can help the plants thrive down the road. Add some organic material, such as compost or fertilizer, to the soil roughly three weeks before planting. This helps the soil retain water and nutrients, which will help your garden thrive.

- Time your planting. When you plant is sometimes as important as what you plant. Some climates allow for year-round planting, but many do not. When buying seeds, the packaging might suggest what time of year to plant the seeds. Adhere to these suggestions or your garden might not grow much at all. In addition, keep in mind that many seedlings need significant light throughout the day in order to grow, so choose a time of year with ample daylight.

- Don't forget to mulch. Mulch can be as aesthetically appealing as it is effective. Mulch retains soil, helping roots to grow stronger, while deterring bugs and preventing weed growth. And many gardeners find mulch adds visual appeal their garden, and does so in a very inexpensive way.

- Clean your tools. Beginners rarely recognize the importance of cleaning gardening tools before putting them away. At the end of each gardening session, clean your tools thoroughly, as soil left on

your garden tools can play host to potentially harmful microbes that might kill your plants.

Gardening can be a labor-intensive yet gratifying hobby. By sticking to a few simple rules, beginners can develop a thriving garden to reward all of that hard work.



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Deer-proofing a garden

Creating a beautiful and bountiful garden is a popular pastime for people all across the country. It is important to keep in mind that aesthetically appealing plants may be appetizing to area wildlife, including deer. Those who do not want their gardens to turn into all-you-can-eat buffets for deer, rabbits and other wild animals can take a more proactive approach to gardening.

Deer are opportunists who will no doubt see your garden as a salad bar ripe with all of their favorite foods. As housing developments continue to encroach on the natural habitats of deer and other animals, these animals are becoming more visible. Deer may not be able to forage for food effectively in their smaller, natural surroundings, or they may become accustomed to the "easy pickings" they find in neighborhood yards. Either way, you may encounter a deer in or around your area.

Keeping deer at bay involves some work and maintenance on the part of a homeowner. There are safe and humane methods to repelling deer, or at least blocking access to the plants worth protecting. Here are the main ways to deer-proof a garden.

Fence It: Fences are one way to deter deer from entering a yard and dining on your garden. Keep in mind that deer can jump fences that are quite tall, but they have to be especially motivated to jump an eight-foot-tall fence. Still, they tend to be weary about scaling a fence when they cannot see what is on the other side. Therefore, if you are fencing out deer, choose a fence that camouflages the garden well and completely encloses the area to be protected. If you do not want the fence to be solid, consider putting stakes or thorny plants within the garden so that the deer will hesitate to jump into the garden.

Scare Them: Deer are naturally skittish around people, but over time they can become quite complacent around human beings. Once a deer decides that something will not present a threat, the deer can adapt to its presence.

Motion-activated devices may not work, nor the presence of pets. Predator urine is typically an effective way at keeping deer at bay. Bottled coyote urine can be quite effective, although human urine may work as well. Reapplying the product weekly around the plants is a good idea.

Repel the Deer: There are many organic or chemically-based products on the market that deer may find offensive to the taste or smell.

Hot pepper, sulfur and eggs or even the use of soapy water have been successful in certain instances. The use of blood meal or even human hair around the garden may repel the deer and keep them on a different foraging path. However, remember that any deer that is very hungry may ignore unpleasant tastes or smells for a quick bite.

Change Plants: If other food sources are available, there are some species of plants and trees that deer will avoid. Filling your garden with these plants can help you maintain a beautiful, albeit untasty, environment for deer.

When planting annuals, select among:

- Alyssum
- Begonias
- Calendula
- Celosia
- Dianthus
- Foxglove
- Geraniums
- Parsley
- Poppy
- Snapdragons

In terms of perennials, plant these items once, and deer could stay away:

- Ageratum
- Anemone
- Astibe
- Bearded iris
- Catmint
- Honeysuckle
- Lantana
- Monkshood
- Rock rose
- Rosemary
- Soapwort
- Wisteria

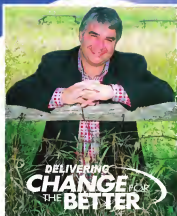
Plant these herbs alongside flowers for even more protection:

- Chives
- Eucalyptus
- Garlic
- Mint
- Thyme
- Wintergreen

Gardeners who use a combination of methods to keep deer out of their yards and gardens may have a higher success rate at deterring these animals.



PETER VAN LOAN MP



Tel: 905-898-1600 • Fax: 905-898-4600

Toll Free: 1-877-Peter-4-U

Email: vanlop1@parl.gc.ca

45 Grist Mill Road, Unit 10,

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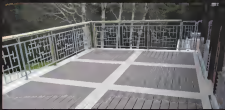
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